Cow Boy Lyrics

Robert V. Carr

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COWBOY LYRICS

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By

ROBERT V. CARR

W. B. CONKEY COMPANY
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DEDICATION

He spoke of his home country like a man talkin' 'bout an old friend—Lem Scobey.

To you, old pard, a hearty "How." Thou knowest I have not forgotten. Thou knowest that some day I will be with you, and, as of yore, we will ride through the rain of a summer's day, or, in the keen October, feel the wind of the western mountains in our faces. Perhaps, it will be a strange range, and we will have to cross the Great Divide before we reach the "Home Ranch," but believe me, boy, I'll be there—I'll be there. And, when we meet, you will say unto me, quaintly and with the light of a great happiness in your face: "You miserable son-of-a-gun, I'm tickled to death to see you." After which you will strike me rudely on the shoulder and call me many strange names. Then your bed will be my bed, your chuck my chuck and your tobacco my tobacco. R. V. C.

Chicago, 1908.

THE END OF THE TRAIL

'Tween the old time and the new,
I have sung heart-songs of you—
You, lean stranger to all fear,
Careless border cavalier.

Now, old pard, that you are gone,
And the gray and cheerless dawn
Of a day called Progress comes,
And the throaty engine hums
Down the trail where you and I
Made our camps and watched the sky
Drop its crimson sunset bars
To a bunch of mav'rick stars—
Then, oh, then, I cry aloud
Curses on the white-faced crowd,
On the heights of stone and wood,
Standing where our line camps stood;
On the jangle of the street,
And each pale worn face I meet.

On the coyote ways of men—
Sharp of fang beyond our ken—
Snapping o'er a brother's bones
For a pile of yellow stones.
Did we seek for gold or fame?
No, we played a careless game;

And on plunging ponies we
Shouted back in mocking glee,
When in town the black gun spoke
Thro' a smiling wreath of smoke.

Thus I dream and long and fret,
For my heart will not forget—
Not forget those old, red days
Of the trail—its careless ways;
Not forget—you know the sign—
Answer me, oh, pard of mine.

RANCH AND RANGE

RANCH AND RANGE

THE OLD COWBOY'S LAMENT

The range's filled up with farmers an' there's
fences ev'rywhere,
A painted house 'most ev'ry quarter mile;
They's raisin' blooded cattle an' plantin' sort-
ed seed,
An' puttin' on a painful lot o' style.

There hain't no grass to speak of an' the water
holes are gone,
The wire of the farmer holds them tight;
There's little use to law 'em an' little use to
kick,
An' mighty sight less use there is to fight.

There's them coughin' separaters an' their
dirty, dusty crews,
An' wagons runnin' over with the grain;
With smoke a-driftin' upward like a hearse
plume in the air,
The story of its shadow sure is plain.

The wolves have left the country an' the long-
horns are no more,
An' all the game worth shootin' at is gone;
An' it's time fer me to foller, 'cause I'm only
in the way,
An' I'd better be a-movin'—movin' on.

THE IRRIGATOR

Was ridin' down a-past his place,
  An' then I thinks I'll 'low
To sort o' pass the time o' day
  An' speak a friendly "how."

He's mussin' 'round there in the mud,
  A little dam he's got;
He 'lows to make a cacti flat
  Into a garden spot.

I says to him the land's no good,
  Fer farmin' she don't win,
But all he does is slop around
  An' kind o' funny grin.

I says the land's jes' useful fer
  Some cows to raise an' range,
But he jes' grins an' hollers back,
  "There's goin' to be a change."

He's mussin' 'round there in the mud,
  A little dam he's got;
He 'lows to make a cacti flat
  Into a garden spot.

THE SMELL OF THE SAGE BRUSH IN THE MORNIN'

Oh, the old, red sun is risin' an' the air is clean an' fine,
With jes' a little chill that tingles thro'
An' starts your thoughts to millin' that the fire o' the cook
Was made jes' sort o' 'specially fer you.
But what jes' makes me glad I simply am alive,
My very heart with kindness sweet adornin',
Is that keen an' bracin' scent that drifts across the flats,
The smell of the sage brush in the mornin'.

Have traveled many trails in this camp you call the world,
An' lived a life as rough as rough could be;
Am jes' a plain, old puncher with all a puncher's faults,
But still there's things that allers come to me
At that there time o' wakin'; they be thoughts so sweet an' fine,
Which no artist or no poet could go scornin',
When I catch that keen, clean scent that drifts across the flats,
The smell of the sage brush in the mornin'.

When I cross the Great Divide an' my outfit will no more
Know me around its wagons or its fires;
I would jes' like to say 'fore I ups an' drifts away,
There's simply jes' one thing my heart desires:
Put me where the sun comes up to ride the western range,
An' all the land with gladness fine adornin',
So my ghost can sort o' come an' sense that sweet perfume,
The smell of the sage brush in the mornin'.

FATHER AND SON

(*Poetic Contribution to the Lariet Lyre*)

His tough old dad was wont to drive
  Thro' here in days of old
A freight outfit and by its side
  He walked and cussed, we're told.
But now his son, all minus brains,
  Goes chug-chug down the street;
He owns an auto, dontcherknow,
  And thinks he's IT complete.

The old man used to think it sport
  To fight and paw around,
And have the bodies of his foes
  All prostrate on the ground;
But mention fight to Willie dear,
  He'd "scweam" for help, you know,
And if a tree was standing near,
  He'd up it quickly go.

The old man used to think it fine
  To grab a flap-jack and
To feed his face with nothing but
  The fingers on his hand.
Now Willie nibbles Bran-o-food,
  Quite pretty and quite sweet,
And has a clean napkin, you know,
  Whene'er he starts to eat.

The old man used to frequent drink
  Of liquid lightning that
Would make him see an elephant
  A-roosting on his hat.
Now Willie takes a soda and
  It overcomes his brain;
The soda has an easy job
  Is also very plain.

The old man used to wear his shirt
  For comfort, not for fit,
And many months would pass away
  Before he would shed it.
Now Willie dons a frilled concern,
  And changes every morn,
And wears a cuff around his neck
  His paw would laugh to scorn.

And thus you'll note the difference
  'Tween Willie and his dad;
It is the truth, altho' 'twould make
  'Most anyone feel sad;
For Willie's parent was a man,
  Tho' rough and tough and rude;
But Willie is that aching void,
  The sappy, modern dude.

WATERLOO OF POKER BILLS

(*A Poetic Effort Recently Appearing in the Chaste Lariet Lyre*)

Oh, he hailed from the Hills, Black Hills,
Black Hills,
And he went by the name of Bills—just Bills,
Of the head that is swelled without more
words,
We'll say he'd the same to throw to the birds;
He thought that of poker there was no turn
That he had ever omitted to learn,
For he'd beat 'em all in the blue Black Hills,
And he longed for gore, did Bills—did Bills.

And so into Denver town went he
With a ripe, round wad of currency
In tens and twenties and the bigger kind—
'Twould make a national bank go blind,
Or Morgan pale or the treasury
Of Uncle Sam know misery—
But Bills—just Bills, that was his name—
Just simply said, "I want a game;
Is there a man around this camp
Who knows a flush from a coal oil lamp?
Come on, I'm from the Hills—Black Hills,
An' my name in full is Poker Bills.
An' I'm here to skin this coyote town
'Til you pull your freight or all throw down.
My name is Bills—you've heerd of Bills,
From the rocky caves of the blue Black
Hills—

An' I'm here fer blood, red blood, red blood,
An' the man who plays me, his name is
MUD."

As he finished speaking a sad-eyed chap,
With a lip a-droop like a pocket flap,
Stepped forward and said, said he:
"I'll go you if I lose, by gee!"
And he throwed a wad that made the chills
Chase up the back of Old Man Bills.

Well, they played and the sad-eyed duck
Seemed loaded down with golden luck;
But he handled the pasteboards awkwardly,
'Til a sand-hill crane could plainly see
He didn't know how, and Poker Bills
Just smiled a bit as he drew for "fills."
But darn it all, the sad-eyed duck
Held onto his dog-gone, blame fool luck;
And he horned Old Bills for all his pile,
And he did it all in a quiet style,
And sweet and kind and pleasantly,
'Til Bills had to grin, did he—did he.

When Bills had soaked his coat and vest,
His watch and chain and all the rest,
He gave a gasp and he said, said he,
"Say, Mister Man, who might you be?"
"Oh, I hain't much," replied Sad Eyes,
"An' Lightnin' Lige is 'bout my size,
An' this here is
My chosen biz.

An' let me say, my Black Hills friend,
Whichever way your tracks may wend,
You'll find this statement mighty true—
There's allers someone as smart as you;
There's allers someone whose head to yours
Is like the sky to a scene indoors."
And he shoved o'er a "V,"
Did he—did he,
That Bills might eat sub-se-qu-ent-ly.

L'ENVOI

And Bills—Old Bills—Old Poker Bills,
Returned in a box car to the Hills,
With his mind made up that to play a game
'Tis always best to know the same.
"To know it well," said Poker Bills,
The champion of the blue Black Hills,
"An' not allow your mind to track
That the whole world is an easy pack,
Or 'cause you skinned the home-folks that
You can't get fried fer all your fat
Whene'er by chance you sadly roam
Away from home, sweet home, sweet home."

WHEN DUTCHY PLAYS THE MOUTH HARP

When Dutchy plays the mouth harp, ev'ry
puncher gathers 'round
To help on with the music by a-stompin' on
the ground;
An' the cook he throws a shuffle an' the night
hawk pats his hand,
When Dutchy plays the mouth harp in a
way to beat the band:
Oh, my girl she has a turned-up nose,
A turned-up nose, a turned-up nose,
Wella, wella, wella, I suppose
That she can't help that turned-up nose.

When Dutchy plays the mouth harp an' we've
cached our chuck away,
An' ev'ryone a-havin' fun an' feelin' mighty
gay,
There's nothin' we likes better than to lend a
helpin' hand,
When Dutchy plays the mouth harp in a way
to beat the band:
Oh, my girl has got a pinto face,
A pinto face, a pinto face,
Wella, wella, wella, who did place
Them freckles on her little face?

When Dutchy plays the mouth harp—does
a cake walk something fine—
'Tis then us old cowpunchers come a-siftin'
down the line
A-swingin' an' a-shuf-fel'in' an' pattin' o' the
hand,
When Dutchy plays the mouth harp in a way
to beat the band:
Oh, my girl she wears a number nine,
A number nine, a number nine,
Wella, wella, wella, it's a sign,
She might as well be wearin' mine.

THE BRONCO BUSTER

You rough-necks think it plenty fun
To set up there an' josh an' run
Your talk-machines an' watch me take
This here old coffin-head to break.

"Stay with him, fan him!" What you say?
"Pull leather?" Nix; I'm here to stay;
No bronk that ever lived or growed,
This prairie chicken ever throwed.

(It hain't because I hate this hoss,
It's jes' because I will be boss;
I'll make him know an' not ferget,
That I am allers boss, you bet!)

See that! he's gentlin' down an' he
Tomorrow will jes' foller me
An' let me scratch his head an' cheek,
A lamb he'll beat fer bein' meek.

Oh, laff, you gobblers, have your fun,
But when with this here job I'm done,
I'll show you would-be's this bronk change,
An' lead the best hoss on the range.

A COWBOY IN THE CITY

Hain't much diff'rence, as I see,
'Tween the city man an' me;
He says a cañon or divide,
Or lonesomeness o' prairie wide
Jes' makes him feel as if the earth
Was utterly dee-void of mirth.

Whilst here I stand an' watch the herd
A-driftin' by, none say a word
To me, or lift a friendly hand,
That I might smile an' understand.

It is a law no man can change—
Each hoss unto his chosen range;
Jes' so, he wants the crowd, the noise,
I wants the prairie an' the boys
A-stringin' out like wild geese fly
When spring roundup's a-passin' by.

ROOBIYAT OF PIGIN-TOED PETE

(A Fragment from the Files of the Lariet Lyre)

I

Hain't Life queer? To me she seems
Jes' like a string of locoed dreams
That foller trails that lead nowhere,
An' so I says, "Don't fuss or cry or care."

II

All happiness is but passin'; 'tennyrate,
Such be the crool words o' Fate;
You meets it fer a minit by the trail,
Then some one ties a tin can to its tail.

III

What crave I? 'Tain't nothin' much—
A flap-jack an' a jug o' such
Nose-paint as them godlets swig, perchance,
An' you beside me at a country dance.

DOC PIERCE'S CHOICE

My friend, Doc Pierce—well, Doc an' me
Set in the hotel, an' there be
An orchestray a-playin' of
Some highfalootin' dream o' love.
Says Doc: "That's music, I suppose—
An Injun thinks a hat is clothes—
But shucks! it hain't the kind that stays
An' makes you think o' other days;
An' makes you go to feelin' sad
B'cause you can't help feelin' glad;
An' makes you go to feelin' glad
B'cause you can't help feelin' sad.

"Now-days real music they don't know,
These long-haired dudelets with the bow,
A-pawin' an' a-twistin' 'round,
Be jes' emittin' of a sound.
Their souls don't talk thro' them there strings,
They hain't got folks to dreamin' things—
I say these fancy fiddlers, now,
O' makin' music don't know how!

"One time I trails," Doc Pierce goes on,
"Up from the South, out West I'm gone,
An' drifts around from camp to camp,
Until one night old Nature's stamp
Falls on my heart—an' I, well, I
Am that homesick I want to die.

"I sees a place an' wanders in
To watch the games an' hear the tin
A-changin' hands, an' likewise see
If any one on earth knows me.
About that time a kid drifts in
A-totin' of a violin—
A fiddle, sure, it was his game
To drift around an' play the same.

"Talk o' makin' dumb things speak!
You ought to see that there boy's cheek
Lay lovin'-like on that noise-box,
Whilst on his heels he stands an' rocks,
An' lets his soul sift down them strings
An' tell you all the sweetest things
You ever heerd of in your life,
From courtin' down to mortal strife.

"An' when he lets her die away,
I rise up here an' beg to say
It seemed the world got dark an' cold,
Like when you know you're gettin' old.
An' then I says to him right then,
'Say, son, I antes up a ten
If you'll jes' give my heart a treat—
Play "Sunny Southern Skies" complete.'

"The kid he nods, then slams his chin
Up close to that old violin,
An' draws the bow—he knew his job—
An' then she starts to cry an' sob;
An' underneadst the cryin' seems

To run a millyun little streams
Of joy an' happiness an' smiles—
An' then, well, then, talk o' the trials!

"I swallers an' I swallers more,
An' stands there blinkin' at the floor;
An' then thro' misty eyes I sees
A tough old rooster try to sneeze,
Pertendin' like he had a cold—
Thinks I, 'Old boy, that game is old;'
An' then I pulls my hat cl'ar down
An' passes out an' drifts uptown,
With that dear song a-ha'ntin' me
Jes' like a ghost o' melody.

" ' 'Neath Sunny Southern Skies,' you bet!
There hain't a piece been written yet
An' played as that there kid played it
An' made a heart-shot, center hit.

"That's why this high-flung music goes
Right past my ears an' never throws
One shiver in my skelp—fer why?
B'cause the player's heart is dry.
He don't play up the soul-game strong,
Or give some heartache to his song;
That's why I say my choice I'll throw
Strong fer that piece played years ago
Out in a camp where homesick hearts
Give to the tears some easy starts,
An' that there kid jes' closed his eyes
An' led me back 'neath southern skies."

AN ORACLE OF THE PLAINS

A bow-legged cowboy sat rolling, one day,
A cute cigarette in his own nimble way;
And when he had finished the coffin nail, he
Delivered this wisdom free gratis to me:

"What's the use fer to worry, or even to fret,
Fer the things of the world you never will get?
An' likewise she's true that fer me or fer you,
There's jes' about one or two tricks we can do;
Be as good as we know an' cut out the bad,
An' allers be cheerful an' never get mad;
Fer the frownin' face gathers the wrinkles, my friend,
An' the smilin' one stays like a boy's to the end."

Thus the bow-legged puncher delivered advice
In a style not offensive but studiously nice;
And then smiling quaintly he winked at the sky
In a way that was childish but wickedly sly.

THE WIDOW'S LOT

Mis' Pike jes' called—the first time fer
A month o' Sundays I've seen her—
She took on scan'luss about me
A-livin' here alone an' she
Jes' upped an' said a ranch was not
A place fer widders, an' she sot
An' harped on that one string 'til I
Jes' shut her mouth with tea an' pie.

Poor William's dead nigh on a year,
But I can't say I'm pinin' here;
An' law me! what's a soul to do,
What's goin' onto forty-two?
Fer who'll dispoot a real live man
Around a ranch is handy, an'
Jack Plummer says to me last night—
He jes' stopped in to get a bite
O' chicken pie—he says, says he:
"You ain't a day o'er twenty-three."
But Jack is such a josher that
He's allers talkin' thro' his hat.

The other day Bill Howe drove by,
An' said the cricks were jes' bank high,
An' he'd a four-hoss load an' he
Declared he'd leave some truck with me,
A sack o' flour an' some corn,
A sack o' sugar which was torn,

Which Bill jes' vowed would go to waste
Unless sweet things was to my taste.

A week ago John Nye drove in—
His heart is big if he is thin—
He said he'd butchered an' he thought
A side o' beef an' bacon ought
To nohow meet with my re-fuse,
Since he had more than he could use.

An' there's Hank Dalley, ev'ry day
He sort o' drops in that-o-way,
To see if there's a chore to do,
An' then jes' stays the whole day thro';
An' jes' flares up when I talk "pay,"
Fer Hank's right touchy, an' he'll say:
"I haven't got a thing to do,
It's exercise to work fer you."

An' so between them all, you see,
There's lots that's worser off than me;
The ranch is clear, an' eggs an' truck
Bring prices high, an' then I've luck
With all my stock, that's bound to grow—
But yet there's one thing which I know,
An' might as well say to your face,
A man's most handy 'round a place;
But William's gone an' there's no more—
Land sakes! There's Dalley at the door!

THE CHUCK WAGON

Cowpuncher's cafay,
It is that-o-way,
An' we strike it kerslam 'bout three times
a day;
When cook yells, "Come get it!"
He don't have to plead,
"Hi yip! all you logies, come gather your
feed!"

BRANDING PEN GOSSIP

Lem Scobey says to me one time,
"I wouldn't give a meas'ly dime
Fer any man what throws a calf,
An' gives that braggin' sort o' laff
As if he thought there ought to rest
A leather medal on his breast,
B'cause he's got more stren'th than branes—
Such swell-head dubs fill me with panes."

Lem says, "I love a good cowpunch
What does his work an' does not lunch
On his conceit 'most all the while
He's showin' off his muscle's style.
"'Tennyrate," Lem adds to me,
As we grabs one, "there ought to be
A law agin such sort o' men
A-ras'lin' in a brandin' pen;
I'd like to see such would-be's fired,
They surely makes me mighty tired."

IN THE GUMBO

No use to kick, no use to swear,
Jes' go in camp an' settle there;
Fer good old patience, this I know,
Your other name is jes' gumbo.

HANK LAIMER'S KID

Only youngun on the range,
  Cutest kid what is,
Got us all upon his string,
  Put us out o' biz.

Bring him presents from the town,
  Tickles him to death,
Little cuss jumps up an' down
  'Til he's out o' breath.

Calls me "nuncle" an' his maw
  Says he loves me, too;
Say, if I had one like him,
  Don't know what I'd do.

Kids are great, I'm here to say,
  Greatest things what is,
Get to love 'em an' they'll sure
  Put you out o' biz.

Bring him presents from the town,
  Tickles him to death,
Little cuss jumps up an' down
  'Til he's out o' breath.

ANIMAL RHYMES

(Contributed to the Lariet Lyre by Willie Western, Age 10)

The Coyote

The coyote he's the smartest one,
  Arithmatick's his choice;
He likes to set up late at nights
  An' multiply his voice.

The Prairie Dog

The prairie dog hain't got much sense,
  His manners are a shame;
But don't find fault with him, b'cause
  His parents are to blame.

The Indian

The Injun he's a savage an'
  He likes to eat an' rest;
He wears some paint, a look o' scorn,
  An' thinks that he is drest.

The Bronco

The bronco likes to roam the wild,
  An' snort an' rip an' tear,
An' kick a yard o' nothin' from
  The outside of the air.

The Bad Man

I think a bad man curious,
  He shoots folks in a rage;
You never see him anywheres
  Except upon the stage.

The Cowboy

The cowboy he's a funny man,
  As funny as can be,
He smokes a millyun cigarettes
  But won't give one to me.

The Tenderfoot

The tenderfoot's the funniest
  Critter o' the plains,
My paw says they is hooman,
  But they hasn't any branes.

The Girl

The girl is nice to look at,
  An' purty as the deuce,
But my, she knows so little,
  She's hardly any use.

The Porcupine

The porkupine is grate on jokes,
  He's a yoomerist like me;
'Most ev'rything he says is sharp
  An' pinted as can be.

THE MAN OF THE RANCH

My dad he's gone an' mammy sez,
  I be the man eroun' this place;
But funny way she sez it, coz
  The tears des runned all down her face.
They comed one day an' took my dad,
  An' 'n they upped an' driv away.
"A-rustlin' stock—ten years fer you,"
  Is what I heerd one man des say.

I be the man eroun' this ranch,
  But, oh, last night my mammy cried,
'N loved me like I wuz a kid,
  'N helt me right up to her side.
She sez it all is fer the best,
  An' 'at the Lord will sure pervide,
'N after while I goes to sleep,
  Des snuggled up to mammy's side.

I be the man eroun' this ranch,
  My mammy sez so, an' you see,
They dassent hurt her coz I guess
  They know that she belongs to me.
But what fer duz she cry an' cry,
  An' why don't no one visit us?
My dad he's gone an' I'm boss now,
  What be the use o' all this fuss?

TAMED

Jim Shivers was the baddest man in the camp,
b'jingo,
Not a feller dast to give him a bit o' lingo;
Up an' shoot? Well, I should say, an' he
never tarried
In his reckulous career 'til he went an'
married.
Now when Jim do say a word or do a bit o'
tellin',
Or gets his old time dander up an' has a fit
o' yellin',
His wife jes' says:
"You great big clown!
You jes' shut up an' you jes' set down!"—
An Jim does both.

He's meek as any lamb you'd see, meekest
sort o' critter,
Any boy around the camp run him to a
fritter;
Never has a word to say, never does no gun-
nin',
Any shootin' goin' on all he does is runnin'.
Jes' b'cause he's got a wife not afeerd to cross
him,
An' 'twould do you good to see that there
woman boss him,

An' hear her say:
"You great big clown!
You jes' shut up an' you jes' set
down!"—
An' Jim does both.

SPRINGTIME ON THE RANGE

Oh, it's gettin' onto spring, an' so let us up
an' sing
Of the greenin' of the prairies in the sun,
An' the comin' of the birds an' the fat'nin'
of the herds—
Start a tunin' up your voices ev'ry one.

Oh, my! see the smilin' sky, winter's gettin'
ready fer to slide,
Air's some warmer, hain't it, say?
Chinook, yes, an' breath o' May,
An' crocuses along the Big Divide.

Soon a feller hears an' sees blackbirds millin'
in the trees,
Soon the roses will be bloomin' fer the May.
Oh, it's comin'—don't you feel that it's
gettin' time to peel
All your winter ways an' sort o' sweetly say:

Oh, my! see the smilin' sky, winter's gettin'
ready fer to slide,
Air's some warmer, hain't it, say?
Chinook, yes, an' breath o' May,
An' crocuses along the Big Divide.

DOWN AT HALLER'S DANCIN'

They's tunin' up the orchestray down at old
Bill Haller's,
He's the feller that they claim jes' beats all
the callers
In the country 'round fer miles—old bow-
legged feller;
Say, you ought to hear that cuss jes' get up
an' beller:
Balance all an' do-see-do,
Rope her, tie her, let her go,
Mill her 'round an' kiss her there,
Prom'nade all, you know where.

Choose your partners! H-m-m-m! well, yes,
grab the next one after,
'Twont harm nothin' if you do shake the roof
with lafter;
Fer she's joy-time, whoop-hi-ree! Come
around a-prancin',
Guess there's nothin' like the time down at
Haller's dancin'.
She's your true love, you can bet,
There's no dead ones in that set!
Lope her 'round an' squeeze her there,
Prom'nade all, you know where.

Hear them fiddles! Hain't they great! Suff'-
rin' Land o' Lawdy!
Ragtime, night time, high time, too, come
a-steppin' gawdy.

Come a-sailin' down the line, whoop-a-lorum! let her,
Seems to me there's nothin' that makes a man feel better.
Mornin' is a mile away,
Never 'spect to hit the hay,
She's a-waitin', wake up there!
Prom'nade all, you know where.

Hear old Haller, hear him now, all above the funnin',
Jes' a-laffin', callin,' too, keeps the thing a-runnin',
Round me up an' turn me loose! Let me go a-prancin',
All I wants is jes' to yell down at Haller's dancin'.
If you love her tell her so,
Rope her, brand her, let her go,
Round her up an' hold her there,
Prom'nade all, you know where.

A MORAL-LESS TALE

(*Poetic Contribution to the Lariet Lyre*)

She was a perfect lady
And she rode the northern range,
Being courted by a creature who was careful of his change;
When he'd have to spend a dollar
He would raise a weird, wild "holler,"
And grumble in a manner both uncouth and very strange.

But this wise and perfect lady
Who rode the northern range
Had a mind in no way feeble or afflicted with the mange;
So she sued for breach of promise
This one Doubting Tightwad Thomas,
And to pay her and the lawyers cost him cattle, ranch and range.

There's no moral to this story
Otherwise than it is true,
Ladies now from east to westward seem to know a thing or two;
Thus it is not talking madly
When we observe quite gladly,
Our ladies trot as swiftly as the best of them can do.

KICK OF THE RANCH HAND

Dern my hide, I feel so lazy,
Feel so stretchy, feel so dazy,
An' the old, red day is dawnin',
An' I'm layin' here an' yawnin',
Thinkin' if I had a dollar,
Like to see the man who'd holler,
Or e'en dare to whisp'rin' say:
"Get up, Jim, don't sleep all day."

What man is there in the land
Has the trubbles of a hand?
Go to bed at dark an' more,
You gets up at half-past four;
An' you pail 'bout forty-six
Gosh-blamed cow-brutes, an' the tricks
That they play an' put on you
Jes' would make an angel stew.

Honestly, I get so mad
That sometimes I wish I had
Power to jes' make one swipe,
An' each kickin' cow-brute wipe
Off this whirlin', jiggy earth,
Fer 'twould give me scads o' mirth—
Honestly, I know it would
Do me jes' a sight o' good.

An' there's pigs to slop an' feed;
Give the hosses what they need;
See the chickens all are fed,
An' the pigins overhead.
An' there's water fer to bring
From that singy-songy spring;
An' there's wood to chop—an' all
This is done 'fore breakfast call.

Then you hook the plow team on,
An' go stragglin' thro' the dawn;
Work an' work an' sweat all day,
Work an' work an' work away.
Dern my hide, I feel so lazy,
Feel so stretchy, feel so dazy,
An' the old, red day is dawnin',
An' I'm layin' here an' ya-a-a-aw-nin'.

A FRAGMENT

(*From the Facile Pen of the Editor of the Lariet Lyre*)

I never thunk a thought as yet,
  Some shinin' wisdom in a chunk,
But what I finds some other yap
  That same old dreary thought had thunk.
Some other yap in other days
  His care-worn intelleck had caught
Upon the nail of hard luck then,
  An' jes' ripped out that same old thought.
That same old thought—the one I thunk
  Was mine—an' by it set a store,
Until I finds it had been sprung
  A thousand years or so before.

BALDY JOE'S SIMPLE RHYME

Oh, I know an old cowpuncher, an' they call
him Baldy Joe,
B'cause his hair is something which is absent,
don't you know;
An' he sits up in the saddle, sort o' lives there
all the time,
An' a-hummin' an' a-hummin' this here simple little rhyme:
There hain't no sense like a logie fer to set,
'Cause you think you hain't a-gettin'
what you think you ought to get.
So it's quit your jawin', keep a tight rein
on your lip,
An' brace yourself an' allers keep
a-cinchin' up your grip.

Joe is a queerish critter, he's a mighty funny
man;
Never has a speck of trubble an' you never,
never can
Hear him kickin' or complainin', 'cause he's
happy all the time,
Jes' a-hummin' that aforesaid an' quite simple
little rhyme.

Been a-thinkin' an' a-thinkin' if the world
was fashioned so,
She'd tally with the hummin' of that happy
feller Joe;
She'd be a blamed sight better, get some bet-
ter all the time,
'Cause there's a heap o' hoss sense in his simple
little rhyme:
There hain't no sense like a logie fer to
set,
'Cause you think you hain't a-gettin'
what you think you ought to get.
So it's quit your jawin', keep a tight rein
on your lip,
An' brace yourself an' allers keep
a-cinchin' up your grip.

A COARSE LACK OF APPRECIATION

I'm the sweetest sort o' singer, but 'most
ev'ry time I sing,
Some ig'rant man's remarkin', "Who choked
that calf—poor thing;"
An' then the boys all leave me an' sadly drift
away,
When I sets up a-pealin' this here charmin'
roundelay:
Oh, Susan, you're my trewest friend,
I will not hold your hand,
I will not tell you of my love,
You would not understand—
You would not understa–a–a—
You would not understa–a–a–and.

I hates to see my friends all leave an' "excuse
me" never say,
Shows 'preciation's lackin' of the fine arts
that-o-way;
Fer when I sings serprano I cannot help it
grieve,
To see each son-of-a-gun get up an' leave—
so ca'mly leave.
Oh, Susan, you're my trewest friend,
I will not hold your hand,
I will not tell you of my love,
You would not understand—
You would not understa–a–a—
You would not understa–a–a–and.

COWBOY'S SALVATION SONG

Oh, it's move along, you dogies, don't be
driftin' by the way,
Fer there's goin' to be a roundup an' a-cut-
tin' out, they say,
Of all the devil's rangers an' a-movin' at sun-
rise,
An' you'd better be preparin' fer a long drive
to the skies.

Oh, it's move along, you dogies, don't be drift-
in' by the way,
Fer the boss of all the rus'lers is a-comin'
'round today;
So you better be a-movin', throw your dust
right in his eyes,
An' hit the trail a-flyin' fer the home ranch
in the skies.

So it's move along, you dogies, fer the devil
has in hand
A bunch of red-hot irons an' he's surely goin'
to brand
All his cattle an' some others, an' mighty
sudden, too,
So you'd better be a-movin' so he won't be
brandin' you.

Oh, it's move along, you dogies, tho' you have
the mange o' sin,
There's a range you're sure to shake it when
you come a-trailin' in,
Where the grass is allers growin' an' the
water's allers pure,
So it's sift along, you dogies, 'fore the devil
brands you sure.

THE BOYS ARE COMIN' TO TOWN

The boys are comin' to town, whoop la!
  What does the marshal do?
He's gone an' hid, that's what he did,
  Fer he knows a thing or two—
Fer he knows a thing or two, yip, yip!
  Fer he knows a thing or two.

The boys are comin' to town, ker bang!
  What does the dogs all do?
They hits the trail with a canine wail,
  Fer they knows a thing or two—
Fer they knows a thing or two, ki yi!
  Fer they knows a thing or two.

The boys are comin' to town, Oh, my!
  What does the old town do?
She goes to bed while they paint'er red,
  Fer she knows a thing or two—
Fer she knows a thing or two, wow, wow!
  Fer she knows a thing or two—

A SUNSHINE SONG

He sets on the side walk from mornin' 'til
night,
Singin' an' singin' an' singin',
"What's the use fer to worry if today is all
right?"
Singin' an' singin' an' singin'.
"Fer we hain't goin' to linger here so very
long,
So what yap will say that a feller's dead
wrong,
If he turns loose his voice in a joy-laden
song?"
Singin' an' singin' an' singin'.

"It's a cinch when we dies we'll be dead fer
some time,"
Singin' an' singin' an' singin',
"So why not enjoy all the things o' this
clime?"
Singin' an' singin' an' singin'.
"Oh, why not jes' shed ev'ry trubble an' all,
An' camp in the light 'til the dark shadders
fall?
She'll be night soon enuff, jes' you hark to
my call,"
Singin' an' singin' an' singin',

THE WOULD-BE COWPUNCHER

It's been out here a half a year,
  An' thinks that It is bad,
But when we takes a look at It,
  Our weary hearts feel sad.

It wears a gun 'most all the time,
  What fer we do not know,
We asks no questions lest we makes
  Of ignerance a show.

It uster be a sap-head clerk
  Down in old I-o-way,
But now It is a ba-a-a-d cowpunch,
  So we have heerd It say.

We often wonders if It is
  Of any earthly use,
An' set around an' ask ourselves,
  "Whoever turns that loose?"

It's been out here a half a year,
  An' thinks that It is bad,
But when we takes a look at It,
  Our weary hearts feel sad.

JIM DAVIS AND THE BICYCLE MAN

Jim Davis is an old cowpunch
  (You certainly knows Jim?)
So listen, boys, an' I will tell
  What happens unto him.
He's drivin' beef herd into Miles,
  But 'fore he gets there meets
A feller on a wheel an' then
  That beef herd surely beats
The record fer the big stampedes—
  An' Jim, I've heerd him say,
Jes' sets right still fer quite a spell,
  To sort o' think an'—pray.
Then Jim gets off his bronco bird,
  An' seeks the bike man's life,
Engagin' him, as poets say,
  In "bitter mortal strife."
"I does not beat you 'cause you's scared
  Five hundred steers or more,
'Tis not fer that," says angry James,
  "I dabbles in your gore.
It is b'cause I hates a fool,
  Weak product o' the town,
Who's so blamed lazy that he walks—
  Jes' walks a-settin' down."

JED WILLIAMS

Know Jed Williams? Blamedest man
You'll ever see or ever can;
'Pears like there's nothin' can disturb
That critter in his ca'm perturb
In viewin' things o' this here life,
With nary hitch or fret or strife;
Fer trubble gives him all the track,
An' never once does she talk back.

Jed craves terbacker fearful sight,
Seems tho' he's got a appertite
Fer eatin' it—you never seed
The man could beat him at the weed.
No matter what or who you be,
Be you yourself or be you me,
If old Jed's 'round he's sure to say—
A-passin' o' the time o' day—
He'll say: "Fine weather, finest ever saw,
How's your chewin'? Give us a chaw."

Was thinkin' now when Jed's first wife
Unhitched herself from this here life—
She's raised right here in this old town—
An' when they lets the coffin down,

Old Jed jes' turned to me an' said—
He pays no 'tenshun to the dead—
Says he: "Fine weather, finest ever saw,
How's your chewin'? Give us a chaw."

Some day old Jed lays down his hand,
An' seeks a strange but warmer land,
Where the range boss is mighty mean,
An' wears his tail ear-marked between.
'Spects then old Jed in his ca'm way
Will size Nick up an' drawlin' say—
He'll say: "Fine weather, finest ever saw,
How's your chewin'? Give us a chaw."

THE NIFTY COWPUNCHER

Allers wears the finest duds ever you did
see,
What he owns the very best simply's got
to be;
An' his boots, well, place your bet, they
take all the tricks,
Made to order, high o' heel, 'bout a number
six.
As fer hat, he's sure there strong, best that
coin can buy,
White an' wide o' brim the same, crown a
little high.

Chaps, he likes the fancy kind, angorees
the best,
Spurs, well, jinglin' dreams! Oh, my!
finest in the west;
Gun, don't pack it much these days, han-
dle's made o' pearl,
Silver-plated forty-five, pretty as a girl.
Belt is simply out o' sight, holster jes' the
same,
Never counts the cost, that boy, so he's in
the game.

Saddle, well, that cost a heap, pockets go
with chaps,
Fer that outfit on the boards he a hundred
slaps—
Hundred plunks it cost him, sure, that be
the amount,
But that saddle means his grub an' his
bank account.
So he rides across the range, yellin' some-
what rude,
Careless, reckless, nifty cuss, reg'ler prairie
dude.

THE COWBOY AND THE STORK

Bill Munson's wife was sick, you see,
Old Bill he says that night to me:
"Go get a doctor on the run,"
An' then I grabs that muckle-dun
Out-law an' jams him forty mile,
An' then I gets a gray a while,
An' leaves him at the lazy T,
A-thinkin' some mean thoughts o' me.
An' then I gets a roan an' he
Was jes' a hoss I loves to see;
He jes' strings out an' drags her down,
An' soon we's siftin' into town.
The Doc drives back an' now old Bill
T'other day gives me a thrill—
The blamed old cuss he did, by gee!
He names that kidlet after me.

RANCH LULLABY

Baby, won't you go to sleep?
  The dark is on an' your pa's gone,
Little one, go to sleep;
  Baby, baby, what would you do,
  If a coyote jes' stoled you?
Dearie, won't you go to sleep?

Baby, won't you go to sleep?
  The pines do sing like everything,
Little one, go to sleep;
  Baby, baby, jes' fly away
  Into Dreamland's shinin' day,
Dearie, won't you go to sleep?

Baby, won't you go to sleep?
  Ride to rest on your ma's breast,
Little one, go to sleep;
  Baby, baby, your little hands
  Wave the trail to Sleepylands,
Dearie, won't you go to sleep?

A TRIBUTE TO THE DOCTOR

Oh, here's to the Doc, the good old Doc,
An' the things he has done fer us,
An' the miles he has rode thro' the winter storms,
'Thout makin' a bit o' fuss.

An' here's to the Doc who worked an' watched,
When he knew that old Death was near,
An' the long, long nights an' the sleep that he lost,
An' the way he ca'med our fear.

Oh, here's to the Doc that stayed by us,
We'd ride fer miles to shake his hand,
Fer the sake o' them days, oh, them early days,
That none but we understand.

TO A COWBOY POET

He rode a bronk he called Pegas',
  To Homer's some related,
A hoss with wings to range the clouds,
  In manner plum' elated.

He likewise packed a instrument,
  He called "the cheerful lyre,"
An' from the same he'd rope a tune,
  An' sing his heart's desire.

He never thought o' things mundane,
  No work he cared to foller,
An' actoolly he never knew
  The value o' a doller.

But when he crossed the Great Divide,
  An' to the skies went wingin',
We found we missed him an' the songs
  That he was allers singin'.

An' tho' we cl'ar fergot the place
  Where we the cuss had planted,
Fer years an' years them songs o' his
  Our hearts have sort o' ha'nted.

POST MORTUM POLITENESS

A cowpunch once shot up the town,
  And after that was done,
A friend informed him that he'd winged
  A dudelet on the run.

"You tell the tenderfoot," cried he,
  With large tears in his eyes,
"If I have killed the blamed galoot,
  I now apologize."

JAWIN' JANE

Jawin' Jane gives me a pain,
  She's old Hank Biglow's wife,
She's there an' over in the game
  Of wordy, mouthy strife.

We names her "Jawin' Jane" an' she
  Would kill us if she knew,
But Hank jes' grins an' looks so much
  Jes' like a Southdown ewe.

Seems like the world is made jes' so,
  All things to mate jes' right,
Fer if I'd Jane I'd sure get up
  An' choke her in the night.

But Hank jes' grins that woolly grin,
  The worst you ever saw,
Whilst that there female works an' works
  Her never-tirin' jaw.

Jawin' Jane gives me a pain,
  She's old Hank Biglow's wife,
She's there an' over in the game
  Of wordy, mouthy strife.

A COWBOY ON RELIGION

The preacher man sometimes comes out,
An' in the school house he do spout,
'Bout "fiery furnace" an' "black sin,"
An' souls he wants to "save an' win;"
But somehow I don't like the game
He spreads in manner meek an' tame,
Fer I has thought my whole life long,
I pays the bill if I do wrong;
It may be years an' years until,
But jes' the same I pays the bill.

Now that the bill sure must be paid,
Be blamed if I am much afraid;
An' likewise I don't see that prayer
An' standin' up with pious air,
Can do away with that there bill,
'Cause 'til she's paid she surely will
Stand on the books agin the cuss
Who had the fun an' raised the fuss;
Fer sayin', "I am saved;" don't kill
The hard, cold fact, you owe that bill.

I know I'm ignerant an' rough,
An', speakin' truthful, somewhat tough;
But jes' the same this fact there be,
There's none to blame exceptin' me;

So this sure puts you on the shelf:
No one can save you but yourself.
You plays the game your own sweet way,
Regardless what the good folks say,
An' if your hand you fails to fill,
Why, you jes' smile an' pay the bill.

THE PAPER MAN

(*A Visit with the Handsome and Popular Editor of the Lariet Lyre*)

He has a press he jerks by hand,
An' Fridays he will take his stand,
An' let a kid roll on the ink
To grease the type, an' then he'll think
It's time to take a smoke, by jing!
An' then he'll stop an' leave the thing,
An' grab a corn-cob from somewhere,
An' with his feet up in the air,
He'll say, "Well, boys, how's stock an' feed?
A little snow is what we need—
Much sickness out your way these times?
I hear Miss Jones weds Billy Grimes,
I lets their write-up front page take,
They sends me chunk o' weddin' cake.
An' poor old Cribs he upped an' died—
His 'bituary bucked an' pied—
But then I sets it up agin,
A-speakin' of the home he'll win,
An' all the virtoos that he had,
Fergettin' nothin' but the bad—
You wants some papers? sure, you bet!
Jes' help yourself, they's fresh an' wet—
No, takin' money is a bribe—
Unless you figgers to—subscribe—

Oh, many thanks, I allers do
Take honest joy in seein' you."
An' then we leaves an' looks back at
The paper man a-jerkin' that
Old press, an' singin' cl'ar an' high,
"We'll all be angels, by an' by."

LEM SCOBEY'S OPINION

Lem Scobey says to me one day:
"I'm feelin' tired that-o-way,
About this wild west guff I reads,
Them eastern papers locoed screeds.
In the first place I'm here to tell,
Real western men don't go an' yell
To some news-sharp how they has killed
Whole Injun tribes or how they's spilled
The blood of forty men or more,
An' that their reg'ler feed is gore.

"Real western men don't give a cuss
Fer paper praise nor do they fuss
An' stand around a-lookin' mad
An' hopin' someone thinks 'em bad.
Nor do they gab in hot air free
Long yarns o' what they uster be.
The truest men, the kind that stay,
Be them that has the least to say;
Such-like are kind an' to the end,
You'll find them stickin' to a friend.
The papers don't ne'er hear o' these,
The mouthy kind is what they sees—
The kind that need six mules an' all
To simply pack around their gall.

"Jes' let me tell you of a man—
None beat his nerve, none ever can—
Won't give his name, 'cause he would kick;
But that won't stop me on this trick.
Call him Dakota, jes' fer fun,
You'll rope the idee when I'm done:
Dakota, small an' sort o' sad,
An' seems to me the feller had
Girl-eyes an' freckles an' a smile
That kept you thinkin' all the while
That any little kid might tie
To him, an' that he'd rather die,
Afore he'd let one he'pless know
Of pain or harm—you bet, that's so.
No bad man 'bout Dakota, tho',
I can't jes' say he was so slow
In any sort or kind of fight,
Except his lips got thin an' white,
An' after it was done he'd say:
'I'm sorry, boys,' an' walk away.
An' it's a fact that right today,
Dakota, good an' kind an' gray,
Don't have a word to say to men,
When on the corner, now an' then,
Some paper man hogties him fast,
To tell the world about his past.

"An' that's the game, real western men
Be the same now as they was then;
Don't wear long hair nor buckskin things,
Don't like the bluff that allers strings
The paper ducks an' never's stint

On seein' his full name in print.
True western men, the kind that stay,
Be them that has the least to say;
The true heart sort that ne'er discard
Your friendship or your true regard;
The kind a feller's free to love—
The kind the world hears nothin' of."

BALLADE OF MISS SUSAN O'TOOLE

(Found in the Waste Basket of the Lariet Lyre —Author Unknown)

Miss Susan O'Toole hated men with a hate
  Some punchers bear water, you know;
If one was a-comin' an' she seen him first,
  Right back to her ranch she would go.
She talked woman's rights an' similar stuff,
  With all o' her fem-i-nine might,
Fer as a gab-artist Miss Susan took all
  The prizes that might be in sight.
She tells the whole range o' this an' o' that,
'Til her jaw-agitation wore holes in her hat—
    Fer Susan O'Toole
    Said she was no fool,
    Ner cared she a rap
    Fer no man or yap
    That ever wore chaps,
      Said Susan.

She said there's a time that surely will come,
  When women will have all the say,
When the last sinful man has give up the scrap,
  An' woman—sweet woman—holds sway.
Then one fatal day a freak drifts along—
  A freak with a string-halted voice,

An' head cl'ar bereft o' the truck known as branes,
An' Susan grabs him as her choice.
Affection long-smothered jes' breaks the crust,
An' her heart is all his to keep or to bust—
Fer Susan O'Toole
Was hit mighty crool,
An' her piller she wet
With some tears, you can bet,
Fer she had it bad,
Did Susan.

One day they was spliced an' she treated him like
An' angel jes' minus the wings;
An' waited on him ev'ry jump in the road,
An' thinks him the "sweetest o' things."
Thus Susan O'Toole made Hen-i-ree Jones
The very best sort of a wife,
She supports him, loves him, an' happy as clams,
They follers the long trail o' life.
An' Susan's sweet voice never once spoke
In its old-time contempt o' the sinful menfolk.
Fer Susan O'Toole
Had found a bright jewel,
A masculine peach
Jes' right fer her reach,
An' she gathers him in,
Did Susan.

ADVICE FROM THE RANGE

If you don't know how to smile
To the people all the while;
If you don't know how to hand
Ev'ry feller in the land
Jes' a little bit o' guff,
Kind o' complimentary stuff,
You'd
Better
Learn
How.

If you don't know how to do
When old trubble's hittin' you;
If you don't know how to take
Ev'ry single keen heartache,
An' jes' down it an' jes' lope
To the shinin' camp o' hope,
You'd
Better
Learn
How.

If you don't know all these things
That a lifetime surely brings,
All the tricks an' all the ways
That'll make the darkest days

Full o' sunshine, full o' song,
'Til they fairly skip along,
You'd
Better
Learn
How.

WHEN IT'S GETTIN' PLANTIN' TIME

Did you ever feel that way,
  When warm weather's comin' on,
An' you smell the green things growin'
  Thro' the dusk an' thro' the dawn?
Jes' a sort o' stretchy feelin',
  With your thoughts all out o' rhyme,
Jes' a lazy, dazy feelin',
  When it's gettin' plantin' time.

When it's gettin' plantin' time,
  An' the grangers sort the seed,
An' the women start house cleanin',
  An' the blackbird's in the reed.
Land-a-mighty! hain't you lazy!
  Why, you're scarcely worth a dime,
All the work you do is hardship
  When it's gettin' plantin' time.

'Drather go an' set an' lis'n
  To the curlews callin' there,
'Drather watch the sunbeams dancin'
  On the gleamy, glinty air.
'Drather lay back sort o' languid,
  'Drather do most anything
'Sides workin', when it's gettin'
  Plantin' time along in spring.

SPRING

(*A Poem on a New Subject from the Lariet Lyre*)

Spring is here,
And the brand-new calf
Doth wobble 'round with mellow
Laugh.
The chickens cluck,
And the glad, young bronco
Snorting there,
In all his mad delight doth try
To kick the
Scroll work
Off
The
Sky.

LET'S QUIT QUARRELIN' FER AWHILE

Let's quit quarrelin' fer awhile,
In this ornry kind o' style,
Let's quit envy, hate an' all,
Let the light o' heaven fall
Into hearts that's dark an' dim,
Thinkin' life's a mournful hymn;
Sing a song brim o'er with joy,
Like we sang as when a boy.
Let us smile an' let's be gay,
Let's quit quarrelin' fer to-day.

Let's quit quarrelin' fer awhile,
Let's shake hands an' let us smile;
Let's not think a single thought
That we really hadn't ought.
Let us play the friendship card,
Let us have a kind regard
Fer how other folkses feel;
Let us quit this envy deal.
Let's jes' live an' let's be gay,
Let's quit quarrelin' fer to-day.

WHEN A MAN HAS MONEY

Friends a-smilin' ev'rywhere,
Weather lookin' mighty fair;
Skies a soft an' tender blue,
Birds a-singin' songs to you.
"Hello there," an' "mornin' Bill,"
How their eyes with gladness fill,
How they grab your hand an' shake,
How they bid you come an' take
Something wet an' hot with them,
Jes' to loosen up the flem
In your throat, fer 'tis so,
Such like favors count, you know,
When a man has money.

Don't the world look bright an' fine,
In her gown of sun an' shine?
Hain't she smilin' sweet an' pert,
Like a reg'ler little flirt?
Don't the glad hands to you reach?
Don't they holler, "you're a peach?"
Don't luck come jes' on the whirr,
When you hain't a-needin' her?
Don't things come, oh, don't they, say,
Come a-runnin' down your way?
Don't it seem an easy game,
Pilin' up some more the same,
When a man has money?

A COWBOY FATALIST

Oh, I don't care if it's rain or shine,
  Or whether she's ca'm or blows;
An' I don't think 'tis fault o' mine
  If it don't or if it snows.
Fer I don't want to even think
  Or care which way I'm bound,
But jes' keep a-smilin' an' lettin' things
    slide,
  An' keep on a-driftin' around.

Oh, I don't care if the whole works set,
  Or whether they moves ahead;
Or what we're goin' to do or get
  When we're gone fer keeps an' dead.
Fer I don't want to even think
  Or care which way I'm bound,
But jes' keep a-smilin' an' lettin' things
    slide,
  An' keep on a-driftin' around.

Oh, I don't care what other folks say,
  Or what in me they sees;
Fer each man's free to think his way,
  An' do as he dern please.
An' I don't want to even think
  Or care which way I'm bound,
But jes' keep a-smilin' an' lettin' things
    slide,
  An' keep on a-driftin' around.

THE OLD COWMAN

I'm not so young as I uster be,
I'm somewhat gray an' wrinkledy,
An' I wear my hat—my old white hat—
On the back o' my neck on a roll o' fat.
An' I don't ride much like I uster, tho',
I'm not so dog-goned gumbo slow
When it comes to bronks, but yet I'll say,
A buggy fer mine 'most any day.

But my heart is young, oh, my heart is
young,
An' she sings the songs like she allers sung:
Dealin' fair an' dealin' square,
An' findin' friendship everywhere;
An' never a fear does she let slide,
Fer the day when I cross the Great Divide.

Old pards are gone—no use to care,
They've rode the trail to Overthere;
But I'll see 'em agin, well, I should shout!
To jes' shake hands fer all get out!
I've no regrets an' that's no lie,
A white man's never afeerd to die;
Old age an' death has got to be,
An', by the gods, they don't scare me!

HOLOWAY

Holoway, that is his name,
Guess he hain't much known to fame,
Lived around these hills a few,
Been to Californy, too,
Got a ranch jes' down the crick,
An' a cabin clean an' slick;
Fer an old batch, Holoway
'Sneater than a pin, they say.
But that hain't a mark to the kindness o' him or a mark to what he can do,
If you happen around with a case of the blues that's eatin' the heart out o' you;
'Tis then that he'll up an' bust you kerbang a slap on the back an' he'll say:
"What's the use o' your mopin', you might better smile, 'cause you looks a lot sweeter that way."

Holoway, yes, Holoway,
Hair an' beard a-turnin' gray,
But his heart is jes' as young
As when all his boyhood sung.
Yes, his heart is jes' as true,
Got the same bright hopin', too,
All these days that you an' me
Fret into eternity.

But that hain't his style, fer he allers has said, "What's the use fer to fuss anyway?
What's past is sure gone an' you might better live fer the smiles you can gather today;"
An' then he will up an' he'll bust you kerbang a slap on the back an' he'll say:
"What's the use o' your mopin', you might better smile, 'cause you looks a lot sweeter that way."

A LITTLE AX TO GRIND

(*Pessimistic Poem from the Caustic Pen of the Editor of the Lariet Lyre*)

The world's plum' full o' people who nail your hand an' smile,
An' greet you in the warmest an' the gladdest kind o' style;
While they make quick calculations on your humble little pile,
An' lay their plans to grab it in the joyous afterwhile,
'Cause they has a little ax to grind.

Politicians an' them roosters what love official pap,
From the boss down to the cringin' an' the confidential yap,
Approach you an' administer your back a hearty slap.
An' put your bump o' caution in a sweet an' gentle nap,
When they has a little ax to grind.

Women, lov'ly women, fair as the dawn o' day,
Be oft the very angels what make the strongest play;

Fer they praise your worldly wisdom in a
sweet an' gentle way,
An' you thinks you's back in Eden when
she springs her charmin' say,
When she has a little ax to grind.

'Most ev'ry day some sucker gets the keen
point o' the gaff,
An' likewise gets the meller an' the gay
equestrian laff;
One half o' all the people wants to work
the other half,
An' taffy is o' this here life the only, only
staff,
When you has a little ax to grind.

A WORD FROM SHORTY

Says Shorty Smith: "It seems some strange
That Cupid rides Affection's range,
Expectin' sure to make a hit
Armed with a Injun buck outfit.
Fer by the way the cards are laid,
An' alimony now is played,
I wouldn't think the god could beat her
Unless he packed a Colts' repeater.

DANCE, YOU PUNCHERS, DANCE

Oh, whoop it up an' let's be gay.
It's a long time now 'til break o' day;
So fer a good time get a hunch,
An' cut your girl from out the bunch—
An' say—
You may
Start them fiddles right away,
An' Jiggin' Finn
With his 'cor'din
Will do the rest, so all join in,
An' pound the floor with your high-heeled boot,
An' swing your granger girl so cute,
An' dance, you punchers, dance.

Oh, lips are sweet an' eyes are bright,
'Tis sparkin' time fer all tonight;
So lope along an' do your best,
An' cut right in an' lead the rest.
An' say—
You may
Start them fiddles right away,
An' Jiggin' Finn
With his 'cor'din
Will do the rest, so all join in,

An' pound the floor with your high-heeled
boot,
An' swing your granger girl so cute,
An' dance, you punchers, dance.

There's drink an' fodder fer you-all,
My land-o'-goodness! hear that call!
The set's a-formin'! Cut loose now!
An' show them bashful fellers how—
An' say—
You may
Start them fiddles right away,
An' Jiggin' Finn
With his 'cor'din
Will do the rest, so all join in,
An' pound the floor with your high-heeled
boot,
An' swing your granger girl so cute,
An' dance, you punchers, dance.

DOC PIERCE'S WAY

Speakin' of Doc Pierce's way,
I've often heerd that old duck say
He'd rather be hisself than all
The millyunaires that he could call
To mind. 'Cause money made or stole or lent,
Don't never bring no man content.

Doc says he'd rather be a-settin' back
A-smokin' in his Black Hills shack
An' visitin' with his friends than be
The big High Squeeze of In-die-ee.

"This thing of cuttin' so much ice,
An' bein' proud, stuck-up an' nice,"
Says Doc, "don't get no game with me;
I simply truly want to be
Myself an' face the music to the end—
An' never be without a friend."

Doc's great on friendship, that I know,
He laughs at every joke I show
To him, as if the thing I told
Was not so dog-goned stale an' old
'Twould make the spirit of sweet mirth
Go chase itself from off the earth.

That's why I'm proud to stand an' say,
Doc's long on friendship that-o-way;
Fer friendship him will allers bring
An' make him suffer anything.

Doc looks at folks what put on airs,
An' pass out frozen-featured stares,
With such contempt he jes' can't speak—
Jes' shoves his pipe into his cheek,
An' one eye at the ceilin' winks,
An' sort o' thinks—jes' sort o' thinks.

You don't know Doc? well, Doc don't care,
Altho' you'd be most welcome there—
Out there in them old solemn hills—
But Doc don't get no sudden thrills
On meetin' folks a-tourin' West,
Doc says old friends are allers best.

You see, it's hard to understand
Us people of the western land;
We've been out there so dog-goned long
We never sing our friendship song
In front of folks, like Injuns did,
We make our heart camps fire-hid.

Doc says to me not long ago:
"There's jes' some things I seem to know,
There's not much to this worldly game
Of trailin' fortune or bright fame.

I want a pipe, a fireplace an' all
My real, real friends in easy call;
An' then the bill I surely fills,
I'd love to loaf around these hills."

An' down here in this roarin' town,
With trolleys grindin' up an' down,
An' people walkin' over me—
No stampede's loco as they be—
I say—I yell with all my might:
Old Doc is right—he's jes' dum right!

A LIGHT JOKE

Tho' in a bunk house on a ranch,
  No 'lectric lights are present,
We slaps a candle in a can,
  An' calls it in-can-des'ent.
An' if you jes' must know the rest,
  You might as well look pleasant,
An' laff like blazes when we names
  Our light a tin-can-des'ent.

THE OLD COWBOY'S COMPLAINT

I stands first guard an' let the kids sleep,
  They sure is a bunch o' logies,
An' with my beautiful alto voice,
  I mesmerize the dogies.

I stands last guard an' lets the kids sleep,
  Let 'em rest, the blamed free-lunchers!
They rides a mile on a rockin' hoss,
  An' thinks they is cowpunchers.

I stands first guard an' I stands last guard,
  An' rolls some cirgarooties,
An' makes to myself some pure remarks,
  'Bout them there sleepin' beauties.

Oh, it's been a stretch of thirty year,
  Since first I roped an' threw 'em,
An' I'm here to state the west's plum' out
  Of punchers like I knew 'em.

L. OF C.

ON THE TRAIL OF LOVE

Girl of the brown eyes, the clear eyes, the dear eyes,
What would you do for me, love,
For me, love, for me, love?
I'd follow you the long trail thro',
My fears for you, my tears for you,
For you, love, for you, love.

Boy of my dreams, my whole dreams, my soul dreams,
What would you do for me, love,
For me, love, for me, love?
I'd shelter you the long trail thro',
My care for you, my share for you,
For you, love, for you, love.

ON THE TRAIL OF LOVE

THAT THERE GIRL

It's that there girl 'most all the time,
Fer workin' I hain't worth a dime;
An' jes' can't turn around or stir
Without some foolish thought o' her.
Can scarcely sleep or eat my chuck—
Dog-gone the luck! I guess I'm stuck!

SPEAKIN' OF HER EYES

Speakin' of her eyes, well, they makes me
Jes' 'bout as batty as can be;
An' tho' fer sleep I surely plays,
I stays awake an' thro' a haze
I sees the baby laugh that lies
A-loafin' 'round her eyes—her eyes.
An' then I walk an' smoke an' fret,
It hain't no use, I can't ferget.

THEM HEAP BIG THOUGHTS

It seems to me some passin' strange,
When Love rides 'cross a feller's range,
He thinks of thoughts a wholesale store,
Such thoughts he never thought before:
Them heap big thoughts, as Injuns say,
Of life an' death an' music gay,
An' flags an' crowds an' flashin' things,
An' then sometimes he backward springs
To thoughts o' mountains big an' high,
Where giants set an' watch the sky
At sunset grand an' great an' still,
An' all the world seems dreamin' 'til
He looks around to hear this call:
"You're jes' in love, my boy, that's all."

THAT SCRUB

'Twas jes' at dark on Friday last
I see her go a-ridin' past
With that there survey outfit scrub,
That sickly-lookin' four-eyed dub
What Uncle Sam has sent out here
To drift around an' interfere
With other folks' affairs an' such—
She needn't think that he's so much!
He'll keep a-triflin' 'round, he will,
Until some one will sort o' fill
His tender hide plum' full o' lead—
Some folks look better when they's dead.

SHE WRITES A NOTE

She writes a note, it starts, "Dear Boy,"
That surely hobbles me with joy;
An' then she says she wonders why
I stays away, an' then, well, I
Jes' saddles up an' hits the trail
An' thanks my stars fer U. S. mail.
An' at the gate she's waitin'; say,
She takes my hat an' there I stay—
That survey scrub? He wins no bets!
The son-of-a-gun I plum' fergets!

HER HANDS

As to her hands, say, they's sure fine;
One time she let them lay in mine—
All soft an' clingy-like they were,
Them little velvet hands o' her;
An' once she set my heart apace
By pressin' one agin my face.
On heaven-talk I hain't much flush,
Nor is I long on love-sick slush,
But still I'll say her little hand
Can pint the trail to Happy Land.

I wish sometimes I'd have a fight,
An' not get killed, but shot up right;
Not bad, you know, jes' middlin' worse,
Jes' so I'd have to have a nurse.
An' then she'd come an' look that sad,
'Twould make me feel all-fired glad;
An' then it drifts to me somehow,
She'd lay her cool hand on my brow,
An' let me right here rise an' tell,
I'd die of joy or I'd get well.

CONFIDENTIAL

When her arms drift 'round my neck,
  An' her head's agin my breast,
Seems to me the whole creation
  Sort o' faints or takes a rest.
When she camps upon my knee,
  An' her cheek's agin my face,
Hain't no round-up boss of glory
  But what's wishin' fer my place.
Speakin' private, when she kisses,
  With a little, catchy breath,
I jes' die—an' blamed glad of it—
  One sweet, temporary death.

TO DANCE WITH HER

To dance with her rounds-up such bliss,
  I can't rope words to half explain;
It's so blamed sweet it seems to be
  A second cousin to a pain.
She drifts an' leans agin my arm—
  Sweetheart an' dreams an' music fine—
If anything is better, say!
  I'd choke with joy if it was mine.

SPEAKIN' OF ARMS

I uster think that arms was made
  To jerk a bronk or throw a rope;
But now I knows such talk is what
  Them editors ear-mark as dope.

It's funny, but it seems these arms,
  Tho' long, don't over-reach a bit,
An' tho' she'd never tried 'em on,
  I jes' be cussed if they don't fit.

An' since I've met her things has changed,
  These arms won't stand fer such abuse
As fightin' bronks or ras'lin' calves,
  B'cause they's got a sweeter use.

An' all I has to say is this:
  All future toil I surely shirk,
Since fer these arms I've better use
  Than mere degradin' common work.

THE TRYST

I've ridden since the day throwed back
  The trailers of the night,
An' what fer, shall I tell you,
  In a stampede o' delight?
To wait out by the cottonwoods,
  An' dove-call softly to
A girl I know will answer:
  "I'm a-comin', boy, to you."

  'Twas no time to spare my bronco;
    His breathin' spells were brief;
  He's white with foam an' shakin'
    Like the Chinook shakes the leaf.
  Fer I've splashed thro' muddy rivers,
    An' loped across divides,
  An' ridden where no puncher
    In his reason ever rides.

  Thro' wallers caked with gumbo,
    The buffalo once knew;
  Thro' water holes an' washouts,
    An' a-boggin' in the slew.
  O'er alkali an' sage brush flats
    I cut the whistlin' breeze,
  An' come straight as the eagle
    When his lady bird's to please.

I'm a-watchin' an' I'm waitin'
  With heart as light as air,
As happy as they make 'em,
  Either here or anywhere.
Jes' to listen fer her footfall,
  An' hear her sweet voice thro'
The prairie silence murmur,
  "I'm a-comin', boy, to you."

JES' A-FOOLIN'

She says to me, "I wish you would
  Jes' quit all time a-teasin' me,
From morn 'til night it seems that you
  Won't fer a minit let me be.
Go 'way now, feller, let me 'lone,
  I never liked you much nohow;"
But say, she laffs when she says that—
  She's jes' a-foolin', I'll allow.

I goes to see her Sunday night;
  She allers says she doesn't care
If I don't come, but why has she
  Them bran'-new ribbins in her hair?
An' why's she got her best dress on?
  Jes' tell me that an' tell me now;
But still she claims she doesn't care—
  Still jes' a-foolin', I'll allow.

T'other night I tells her straight
  I loves her, an' you ought to see
That little flirt jes' tip-toe up
  An' give the sweetest kiss to me—
Ah-m-m-m! 'twas sweet, but still she says
  She doesn't like me much nohow,
An' then she'll laff an' squeeze my hand—
  Still jes' a-foolin', I'll allow.

REAL AFFECTION

If I could say the words I think,
  My tongue with overwork would bust;
I'd make old Shakespeare rise an' say:
  "What varlot now disturbs my dust!"
If I would do the things which I
  Am simply achin' to perform,
I'd rope the lightnin' an' I'd jerk
  The terror from the blindin' storm.

I'd use a comet fer a bronk,
  An' ride him stuck-up like an' proud;
My spurs would be a pair of stars,
  My blanket jes' a fleecy cloud.
I'd roundup all the planets an'
  I'd do it sudden, sure an' soon,
An' then I'd set back ca'm an' watch
  Them mill around the helpless moon.

I'd do all this an' maybe more,
  Pervidin' that I thought it would
To this here busted heart of mine
  Do any sort of passin' good.
I'd do it all an' take a chance
  To hold the trail thro' Afterwhile,
If she would throw me jes' one word
  An' tie it up with one sweet smile.

A COWBOY'S RESOLUTION

I holds a tight rope on conviction,
  Determination's ever been my style,
An' to tie an' brand a resolution,
  'Most any day I'd run a dozen mile.
I am that set in my opinion,
  A mule is like a rabbit a-side me,
There hain't no use to try persuasion,
  Fer what I say has simply got to be.

There hain't no livin', breathin' woman
  Can make me jump or hang upon her word;
No skirt what's flirty or uncertain
  Can ever hope to cut me out the herd.
I've said she'd have to quit her triflin',
  An' 'til she did no pictured olive branch—
She writes me notes on foolscap paper—
  Would make me ever even cross her ranch.

Of course on Sunday nothin's doin',
  An' really I've some business with her dad,
So I'll happen in jes' fer to see him—
  (I wonder if she is a-feelin' sad?)
I holds a tight rope on conviction,
  Determination's ever been my style,
An' to tie an' brand a resolution,
  'Most any day I'd run a dozen mile.

BASHFULNESS

Oh, say, I'd like to tell her
  That I love her like the breeze
Loves the leaves, or like the sunshine
  Loves the whisp'rin' cotton trees;
Like the water loves the pebbles,
  Singin' soft an' singin' low,
But when I starts to tell her—
  I jes'
    Don't know.

Oh, say, I'd like to tell her
  That I love her like the smile
Loves her face, or like the dimples
  Love her sweet mouth all the while;
That I love an' love an' love her
  Better than my life, but tho'
When I starts out to tell her—
  I jes'
    Don't know.

TRAIL SONG

Little girl, back in the town,
  Be you a-lovin' me?
Little girl, back in the town,
  Be you a-lovin' me?

Uster think the dawns was fine,
With their colors all a-shine,
'Til I seen your eyes, Lu-lee,
Smilin', laffin' back at me.

Uster think the lilies tall,
Of all flowers passed 'em all,
'Til I seen you standin' there
With the sunshine on your hair.

Uster to dream o' that Great Camp,
When I'd watch the heaven's lamp
Light the whole wide range o' blue;
Now I'm dreamin' jes' o' you.

Little girl, back in the town,
  Be you a-lovin' me?
Little girl, back in the town,
  Be you a-lovin' me?

AN' A TWO-STEP'S WHAT THEY PLAY

A little queen in calico,
  Her smiles—them killin' smiles—
Be jes' some o' a thousand
  Of her wicked ways an' wiles;
An' she's the smoothest dancer
  'Most anywhere you'll see,
An' you ought to see her two-step,
  La-de-da, along with me.

Oh, she's light as any feather,
  The music's simply fine,
An' I jes' get plum' loco
  When her face is close to mine.
Fer my heart is thinkin' something
  My lips don't dast to say,
When she leans agin my shoulder
  An' a two-step's what they play.

I could dance with her ferever,
  Wisht we never'd get thro',
'Cause Time jes' takes a lay-off,
  An' reason quits work, too.
Seems ev'rything has ended,
  Fer a spell fergot to be,
When they plays a two-step sweetly
  An' she drifts away with me.

PARTIALITY

You can sing about the glory
  Of the summer sunset skies,
But I will keep a-hummin'
  'Bout the glory of her eyes.
You can sing about the roses,
  But roses can't compare
To this little granger maiden
  With some ribbin in her hair.

You can sing about the lilies,
  Jes' as pure as purest snow,
But I'll jes' keep a-hummin'
  'Bout a fairer flower, tho';
A purer, sweeter flower
  Than the lily bendin' there,
Jes' a little granger maiden
  With some ribbin in her hair.

All you poets sing o' beauty
  In the flowers, skies an' streams,
But I'll jes' keep a-hummin'
  'Bout one girlie in my dreams;
'Cause I think my subjeck's sweeter
  Think I sing a sweeter air,
'Cause it's all about a maiden
  With some ribbin in her hair.

A ROMANCE OF THE RANGE

She's been out here a-teachin' this winter now that's past,
An' I hears that she's a-tellin' that it's jes' about her last—
That she's goin' to quit the schoolroom an' goin' home to stay—
An' somehow I'm jes' hatin' fer to see her go away.
Fer us fellers think that schoolmarm is an angel; yes, we do—
A little blue-eyed angel, yet a woman thro' an' thro';
An' she treats us all so kindly, jes' the same 'most ev'ry day,
That somehow I'm jes' hatin' fer to see her go away.
She hain't never give me reasons fer to think I'd have a show
To win her, but I'm honest when I say I like her so
That I dread her time fer goin', count ev'ry passin' day,
'Cause I'm hatin', jes' a-hatin', fer to see her go away.
Well, her term is 'bout completed an', say, I don't think I
Have got the nerve to greet her fer to say a last goodby;

Seems so tough! Oh, well, I'm feelin', call
it heartsick, if you may—
'Cause I'm hatin', jes' a hatin', fer to see her
go away.

LATER

Oh, say, I'm 'bout as happy as a feller wants
to be;
Went to see her an', by glory, she jes' upped
an' cried—you see!
An' right there I had to say it, what so long
I've feerd to say,
An' now we've gone an' fixed it so she'll
never go away.

AN ODE TO THE SLOW HORSE

Oh, now that sleyin' time is here an' weather
is jes' boss,
I likes to take her drivin' with the tamest
kind o' hoss.
I wants no prancin' bronco that makes a
sudden dive,
An' r'ars an' t'ars hisself in two,
But one
That she
Can drive.

I wants a bronk what knows his biz an' minds
it to the chalk;
I wants a bronk can pass the rest, yet slow
down to a walk
When I has got my arms engaged, while
hearts from bustin' strive;
I wants a bronk, that kind o' bronk,
That kind
That she
Can drive.

When sparkin' nights an' sleyin' nights an'
moonlight nights are here,
An' she an' I are tryin' fer to snuggle close
an' near,

I wants a bronk what pokes along an' lets
our hearts revive
On Love's own joy behind a bronk,
A bronk
That she
Can drive.

TRUE LOVE

Oh, true love don't ne'er stampede at what
folks think or say,
An' ridicule jes' simply spurs him on;
You can pitch an' r'ar an' jolt, but when once
he gets a holt,
You might as well admit that you is gone.

I'm free to mention that she's a lady workin'
at
The very best hash foundry in the town;
I'm here to likewise say that fer sweet an'
winnin' way,
The best of them can't hope to call her
down.

There's the "400" here what sniffle some an'
sneer,
An' think ace high above her they stand
scored,
'Cause she's packin' Irish stew to a famine-
stricken crew
Or shootin' vulgar biscuits 'cross a board.

When roundup's thro' an' done, I rides back
here on the run—
She waits on one star boarder after that;
I'm certain that-o-way an' I stakes my life
she'll say:
"Jes' wait until I gets my Sunday hat."

What's that? You seem to scout a little cloud o' doubt,
An' figgers that perhaps she'll pass me by;
But it's ignerance makes you take that pessimistick view—
Don't she allers give me SECONDS on the pie?

TIME'S HEAVY HAND

She was jes' a little granger an' her folks
lived on Elk crick,
Jes' a little dark-eyed granger, but she allers
drest that slick
You'd think she'd caught the fashion from
the ladies o' the town,
'Specially when buggy-ridin' in her Sunday-
meetin' gown.

Uster take her 'way out drivin' on a Sunday,
don't you know,
But I'd let her do the drivin', fer I liked it
better so;
An' then my arm would circle—huh, she'd
pertend to frown—
The place what was the smallest in her
Sunday-meetin' gown.

Starlight, yes, an' prairies dreamin', cotton-
woods a-sighin' there,
An' the wind a sort o' triflin' an' a-foolin' with
her hair;
An' a ribbin on my shoulder or a strayin'
curl o' brown,
An' her heart a-beatin' gently 'gin her Sunday-
meetin' gown.

Uster kiss her—huh, well, sort o'—when the
moon got back a cloud,
An' she'd pout her lips pertendin' she was
mad an' then aloud
She'd laff an' fix her ribbins, fer at times such
things come down
When a girl goes buggy-ridin' in her Sunday-
meetin' gown.

Goodness my! but time's skeedaddled; jes'
a-driftin' that-o-way,
I'm bald-headed—gettin' worser ev'ry single
passin' day;
An' mother, oh, well, mother busts the scales
up in the town,
An' she's made herself a necktie of that
Sunday-meetin' gown.

PLATO DISPUTED

When two folks love each other it hain't no
earthly use
Fer hide-bound criticism to hand out cold
abuse,
Fer nature has 'em hobbled, that's what, my
turtle dove,
'Cause there's no such place as a Half-way
House
Upon the Trail of Love.

Lady-bird, I wants to tell you, tell you glad
an' free,
That old duck named Plato was wrong as
wrong can be;
As sure as there's a roundup on the great
range above,
There's no such place as a Half-way House
Upon the Trail of Love.

You ride the trail to the finish, go lopin' right
along,
An' never stop to question if it be right or
wrong;
You spurs your bronco forward an' backward
reason shove,
'Cause there's no such place as a Half-way
House
Upon the Trail of Love.

WHEN SHE GOES TO GET THE MAIL

She hain't got any dimunds nor a rustlin' lot
o' silk,
Never uses them cosmetics, never bathes her
face in milk;
But she's jes' a little chicken livin' out there
by the trail,
That a feller meets a Sunday when she goes
to get the mail.
When she goes to get the mail
An' the sunset's gettin' pale,
An' the grass is like a carpet
'Long the old Pactola trail.

Freckles, yes, but lips of honey; nose turns
up a bit, I guess,
An' there's jes' a scad o' patches in her little
homely dress;
But I'd rather, rather have her than most
others that I know,
B'cause, well, honest Injun, jes' b'cause I
love her so.
When she goes to get the mail,
Allers meet her without fail,
Jes' to ride home in the twilight
On the old Pactola trail.

Left her one night lookin' back with the tear-
shine in her eyes,
An' her voice was sort o' trembly like most
women's when they cries;
An' I've ranged the dreary country from the
start to ev'rywhere,
But somehow I'm allers thinkin' that I left
my heart back there.
When she goes to get the mail,
Girl, I'll never, never fail
Fer to love an' long to see you
On the old Pactola trail.

THE PRINCESS OF DESIRE

Lem Scobey, of the Flying V,
Tells out the tale one night to me,
Of Sheriff Ben, the lad an' her,
An' the Ralton gang of Sinneber.

Said Scobey, gazing at the fire,
"We names her Princess of Desire,
B'cause we figgers some that she
Was 'bout as perfect as they be;
An', bein' so, 'twas certain she
Was member o' the royalty
In that there state o' Sweet Desire,
Where Love is king an' no one higher.

"She comes to camp one ba'my day,
An' a pale-like lad hung that-o-way
Along her trail, you'd think she had
A mortgage on that self-same lad.
That boy jes' idolized her, too,
'Cause 'fore he come he'd jes' pulled thro'
A fierce old bleedin' at the lungs—
'Most thought he'd clim' the Golden Rungs.
Then she jes' packs him, kit an' all,
An' comes to Lariet that fall.
He loves her strong, the boy sure did—
An' we o' such-like was not rid—
Not brother love but gen-u-wine
Old 'Achin' Heart' an' 'Ever Thine.'

"Her folks was dead an' she had come
To dabble 'round in cattle some,
An' 'side from lookin' after wealth
Was standin' guard o'er that kid's health.

"She uster set there on the step
O' the hotel, whilst others slept,
An' softly talk to them what staid
An' hung around her half-afraid,
Like moths all singed with candle-flame
What still set in an' play the game.
An' then she'd say to Brother Jim
To get her wraps, an' then the slim
Kid would burn the trail so rabbit-fast
You'd think he thought it was the last
Sure chance to win some sweet smiles fer
A-hangin' on the word o' her.

"With men, her lov'ly face an' form
Would start a reg'ler blindin' storm
Of feelin'—that which chokes a man—
I say, old pard, soft fingers can
Bind more than chains or bars or bolts,
Or any kind o' man-made holts.

"She uster make me sort o' think
Of tiger lilies on the brink
Of some cool stream, where fairies played,
Or little children laffin' strayed.
An' then agin it seemed to me
Her eyes helt all the mystery
That this old world has ever known—

Jes' like you feel when all alone
Out on the range at dead o' night,
When spirits whirl in locoed flight,
An' all is still an' shadders crawl,
An' things grow grand an' great an' tall;
An' in the dark your bare soul lies,
An' God jes' reads it with his eyes.
To see her was to sure release
Your everlastin' holt on peace;
To hear her voice meant Love to spring
Up in your heart a restless thing;
An' in your dreams she'd smile an' you
Would give your life if it was true.

"Of course, we all gets dreamin' some—
To 'most all men such dreams will come—
An' now I hain't ashamed to say
The Princess smiled my heart away.
But one night I jes' fights it out,
An' gets my senses back—about.
I? Why, matin' with a shinin' star,
I stands more chance by ten times far.
An' so I plays unto the end
With her a plain, outspoken friend;
But 'twas a lie that hurt like sin,
But still Love's great if you don't win.

"But Sheriff Ben was hopeless hit,
An' oftentimes he uster sit
With her o' moonlight nights, an' she
Would talk to him, an' he, well, he
Would jes' grow pale with pure delight—

It was a cinch he had it right—
An' scarcely say a word or speak,
But looks into her eyes as meek
As any child. Yet this here Ben
Was a rip-snorter out with men.
He had gray eyes an' when he spoke
'Twas gener'ly from out the smoke
Of his old six-guns; when he turned
Them loose, then gray eyes burned
An' got like little pints o' steel,
An' no man cared their glance to feel.
Big chest, thin flanks an' quickness that
Was like a high-strung mountain cat—
Yet with the Princess he was like
A little child, an' oft we'd pike
To Big Pete's Place an' leave Ben there,
A-courtin' of his lady fair.

"Don't know jes' how it happened then,
But seems she was a-stringin' Ben—
Jes' playin' him as fishers play
A fish they know can't get away;
Jes' passin' time away fer fun
With Ben's true heart all cinched an' won.
Of course, us fellers see it hard,
But dassent lend a helpin' card;
Fer well we knows that Ben would drag
His bunch o' guns an' surely bag
The gent what spoke a word o' her,
Or jingled e'en a warnful spur
In front the Bronk o' Love persuin'
The reckless trail to lastin' ruin.

"You 'members when the Raltons gay
Holds up the mail one late fall day
To grab that gold fer eastern lands
Into their hungry, lovin' hands?
Then Ben jes' saddles up an' rode
Up front the Princessus' abode.
She laffed an' wished him scads o' luck,
An' her white fingers at him shuck,
An' said, 'Tomorrow night, a week,
Bring me the Raltons, Mister Meek.'
Poor Ben, with heart all strung up fine,
Chokes back Love's words an' ties a line
Around his gauntlet, mindless-like,
Then says, 'Goodby, I takes a hike;
Alone I brings the Raltons in;
I stay out there—or else I win;
I takes my pris'ners 'lone,' he said,
'An' if I can't—well, some one's dead.'
But she jes' laffs an' leaves Ben there,
As if she did not have a care
If Death fer him some suddin knocks—
Say, woman's sure a paradocks.

"Not that her tears would helt him back
From off o' Duty's shinin' track,
But had she flashed Love's sign to Ben,
He'd never'd been so reckless then.
He'd took us fellers 'long an' we
Would make short work o' hold-ups three;
But man's fool pride an' woman's way
Let Death play winner on that day.

"We knows Ben's style an' knows he would
Make ev'ry word he says stand good,
An', knowin' there was three hard men
To one, we ups an' follers Ben.
By layin' low an' hangin' back
An' trailin' up his bronco's track—
Which then at times grows mighty dim—
We 'lows to keep in reach o' him.
Fer if he'd sight us, sure, he'd come
An' turn us spraddlin' back fer home.
'I takes my prisoners 'lone,' he said,
'An' when I can't—well, some one's dead.'

"The next day out we slips up to
Three trails, an' one a-windin' thro'
We spots as Ben's, an' Billy Bawn
Locates Ben's boots, the spurs are on,
An' in some trees we starts his hoss—
The painted one he names 'Old Boss'—
Half-dead fer water, then beyun'
We sees where he'd the fight begun.

"He gets two men the first thing done,
An' then the third one jerks his gun
An' let's Ben have it in the chest,
An' Ben comes back his very best—
An' there the four o' 'em lay still,
An' o' that sight I gets my fill,
An' goes away fer quite a spell,
Queer feelin' that, I'm here to tell.

"You see, Ben'd slipped up quiet-like,
An' 'fore they could much think to strike,
He calls "handsup," but they don't heed,
So two o' them get what they need,
An' then what's left winds up the game—
A quick, clean fight it was the same.

"Afore he dies Ben writes three words,
A pencil scratch, fer when Death herds
A man he don't write fancy, tho'
'Twas plain enuff fer her to know.
'I love her,' them's the words he wrote;
'I love her,' was his dyin' note.

"An' so we ropes him on his hoss—
The painted one he names 'Old Boss,'
An' when the sun was goin' down,
We brings the sheriff into town.

"I finds her on the hotel step,
An' 'round her great, queer shadders crept;
Her face shone white, jes' like two stars
Was her dear eyes—an' then the bars
Of rough, hard talk I jes' let down,
An' says, 'We brings him into town;
He's dead, an' little does you care
Of how or what or when or where!'

"She says no word, jes' goes stone-blind,
An' stumblin', tries my hand to find,
An' when I tells her what Ben wrote,
She t'ars a cry from out her throat—

An' then come tears—such tears—such tears,
They made me think I had the Queers;
An' then I goes away to hide
My own, own love fer which I'd lied.

"An' that same night the Princess cried
'Til daylight by the Sheriff's side.

"Next day she leaves, an' blamed if we
Did not the worst kind hate to see
Her go, an', well, it makes me sort o' sigh,
Fer she jes' kissed us all goodby;
Ne'r missed a one, 'cept Billy Bawn,
Who says, "I takes mine lookin' on."

"Now this here yarn o' woman's ways,
I never sabes in my days;
When Ben was livin' she would laff
An' think it fun to ever gaff
His heart, but when he ups an' dies
She goes cl'ar wild an' cries—an' cries."

THE MAN YOU COULDN'T GET

You can cry and you can try,
To the very day you die,
Turnin' up a haughty nose—
Sort o' scornful, I suppose,
But you're still a-dreamin' yet
Of the man you couldn't get.

Most as likely some day you
Will get married—hope you do—
An' your proud neck bend to rub
Little dresses in a tub;
But somehow I place this bet:
Him you never will ferget.

Course you knows time's comin' that
You'll be homely, old an' fat;
Then your man will wonder why
Once a great while that you sigh;
Well you knows what makes you fret,
Even then you can't ferget.

Husband, yes, he'll wonder why
That you turn a-drift a sigh,
Tho' he'll feel it sort o' dim,
That the said sigh hain't fer him—
It's fer one you love some yet:
Fer the man you couldn't get.

He don't care, fer 'tis true,
He jes' sort o' thinks o' you,
As a girl he uster know—
One o' many, sure, that's so.
But you're longin', sighin' yet,
Fer the man you couldn't get.

Can't ferget that night that you
Loved him long an' sweet an' true,
Can't ferget his voice an' style,
Reckless, careless all the while,
Can't ferget that old dark day,
When he laffed and walked away.

SARY

When Sary waves her hand to me,
  An' smiles as sweet as honey,
She hands to me a bunch o' joy,
  What has no price in money.
Right pert-like stands the little trick,
  An' says: "So long, my feller,"
An' well she knows "goodby's" the word,
  What I jes' hate to tell her.

When Sary waves her hand to me,
  Say, there's no use o' talkin',
Away from her to jump my bronk,
  Be hardest kind o' walkin'.
'Pears ev'ry step comes slower an'
  My feet get so contrary,
B'cause they knows it is not right
  To walk away from Sary.

When Sary waves her hand to me,
  I feels so triflin' lonely,
That I'd go back but then I knows
  That maiden would jes' only
Give me the laff, an' then agin,
  It's that much more to suffer,
Fer one goodby is tuff enuff,
  Whilst two goodbys is tuffer.

A LOTHARIO OF THE RANGE

If Love won't come to me today,
(I meets her at a dance),
I'll saddle up an' sift away
Across the range, Oh, my turtle dove,
An' I ropes fer you that yearlin' Love:

An' it's blue eyes an' golden hair,
An' lips that makes me faint,
An' a lovin' way that makes me say:
"Dog-gone all cold restraint!"

If Love won't come to me today,
(I sees her back in town),
Around this ranch I will not stay;
Fer I hears you sigh an' hears you cry:
"Without you, boy, I will surely die:"

An' it's black eyes an' blacker hair,
An' smiles to make me glad;
An' a desp'rate way that makes me say:
"I'll never make you mad."

If Love won't come to me today,
(Her old paw keeps a dog),
I'll saddle up my bronco gay,
An' hit the trail, Oh, I know you're true,
An' I comes a-runnin', sweet, to you:

An' it's dark eyes an' soft brown hair,
An' hands that cling to mine,
An' a dreamy way that makes me say:
"You certainly is fine."

If Love won't come to me today,
(I hates to talk so plain),
My only stack I'll up an' play,
An' stakes the wad that I beats the god,
An' make him feel like a sun-burnt clod:

An' it's girls, Oh, girls, please listen,
Don't think I am a fright;
Fer it hain't no fun to love jes' one,
With millions more in sight.

BOY, WILL YOU CARE?

Onct, twilight time, we's out an' she
Jes' looks away—away from me,
Into the fadin' sunset range,
An' then I sees her sweet face change,
An' that sad look come driftin' there,
An' then she says: "Boy, will you care,
When I jes' fade like that there light
Is soft a-fadin' into night?"

An' I jes' laffs an' answers back,
"Don't you no borrowed trubble pack,
An' cross no cricks or fords, my dear,
When they be miles away from here."
An' sort o' like she was a kid,
Around her one big arm I slid,
An' gathers her up close to me,
An' speakin' out some suddenly:
"Jes' let the blamed old sunset fade,
The dawn's a-comin', who's afraid?
Fer time or age or anything,
That the dark future has to spring,
Sees me the same an' that is true,
Fer, by the way, I jes' love you."

WHERE THE CHINOOK
BLOWS

The west wind wooed the blushing rose,
And blew her kisses sweet with musk
From dawn of day until the stars
Shone tenderly thro' purple dusk.
The west wind wooed the blushing rose,
And sang to her a heart-song true,
And placed upon her head a crown
Of sunshine's gold begemmed with dew.
The west wind wed the blushing rose,
Embowered there in leafy nook,
And heaven blessed their first-born fair,
The fragrant and the warm Chinook.

WHERE THE CHINOOK BLOWS

GREEN PRAIRIES

Green prairies, green prairies all drenched in the rain,
Or a-gleam in the dance of the sunbeams again;
In the sheen and the shine of the dawn and the light,
Or the murk and the gloom of the shadows of night;
In hearts that have known thee thy memories reign,
And thy voices, clear calling, call never in vain.

THE RANCH HOUSE

Upon the logs a wolf hide hangs,
A saddle lies beside the door,
And just within its shadow there
A baby creeps upon the floor.

THE SPRING ROUNDUP

A world of dust peopled by strange shapes
  That whirl and plunge and rear,
A carnival of sound, deep, wild and hoarse,
  That speaks maternal fear.
Stern work for man and trusty horse,
  Swing out, swing in and pass!
The day is hot and long, but yet
  Tonight, upon the grass,
The horse will ease his fevered sides
  And man will count it blest
To smoke and talk and lastly know
  The pleasant range of rest.

THE CAMP'S ASLEEP

The camp's asleep and thro' the gloom,
The white-topped wagons spectral loom;
And weird the lonesome coyotes call,
And quiet stars stand watch o'er all.
The fire's down, the shadows creep,
Their work is done, the camp's asleep.

TWILIGHT ON THE RANGE

To soft subdue the wide wastes to its thrall,
Palpatant, a purple haze enchanteth all;
Silence, save the curlew's sad, insistent call,
Or suddenly and sweet the mellow boom
Of night hawks circling thro' the deepening
gloom.

THE CROCUS

Shadow-shapes of skulking wolves along the bluffs,
They prey upon some weakling of the herd.
Snow-mottled all the prairie lies,
The sky an ashen gray, the sunlight blurred.
Gone, gone are all the hopes that bloomed
In summers past 'neath skies of blue.
Lo, see! a crocus in a bed of snow,
Ah, hope of summer blooms anew.

TIGER LILIES

Warrior flowers, with tossing plumes of red,
In stately groups with flaunting banners
spread;
A triumphant host among the humble grass,
Guarding every upland park and pass.

SAGE BRUSH

A dusty trail, a burning sky,
And splotch of leprous alkali;
Gray, somber wastes that touch the rim
Of Shadow Land, vast, vague and dim.

THE BAD LANDS

Bluffs of ochre and brown and red,
  In varied glory flare,
For here is the land of mystery,
  Where God plays solitaire.

A gray plain and a soft mirage,
  In the blue haze over there,
For here is the land of lonesomeness,
  Where God plays solitaire.

A mudded butte and shapes that come
  And at the sunset stare,
For here is the land of forgotten pasts,
  Where God plays solitaire.

A silence that dwarfs the soul of man,
  Oh, the silence everywhere!
For here is the land of things unsolved,
  Where God plays solitaire.

THE RATTLESNAKE

O'er sun-baked plains he winds his way,
Slow squirms his glittering length along,
And from the sage brush sanded gray,
Doth come his fearful warning song.
Watch, watch for him, his sting is death,
And in those angry, flaming eyes
Doth lurk the awful hate of years.
Sunning where the barren bluffs arise,
He lies in lazy coil. The scaly lid
Doth curtain o'er those vengeful eyes;
Doth hold their murderous fire hid—
When lo, a step is heard, the horrid head
Is swiftly reared and keen he sounds
His challenge full of deathless hate.

THE BUTTES

Half-hid in shadow, vague and drear,
They loom like sculptured shapes of fear:
Monuments and ghastly domes,
  And toppling turrets tall,
That rear misshapen forms above
  Yon monstrous castle wall—
Yon castle wall where dwarfish pine,
  In ragged fringes set,
To scar the sick moon's pallid face,
  With grotesque silhouette.

PRAIRIE WOLVES

Up where the white bluffs fringe the plain,
When heaven's lights are on the wane,
They sing their songs as demons might
Shriek wild a chorus to the night.
Gaunt, gray brutes with dripping fangs,
And eyes aflame with hunger-pangs,
With lips curled back in snarls of hate,
They wail a curse against their fate.

THE WINDS OF THE WEST

Oh, the west winds, the wild winds, glad vagrants and free,
They sing of the lure of the long trail to me;
They sing of a bluff, a lone wolf on the crest,
And the tang of the sage from the wastes to the west.

Oh, the west winds, the wild winds, a mad symphony
That shouts of the smoke of the line camps to me;
And out of my soul bursts a passionate cry,
"Oh, I come, I come home, for thy bondman am I."

ON THE TRAIL OF
YESTERDAY

On the trail of yesterday,
Retrospective fancies play;
In the camp fire burning low,
Strange, wild pictures come and go.

ON THE TRAIL OF YESTERDAY

ONJINJINTKA

(*An Indian Legend*)

Camped in the foot hills, their fires bright
With spears of flame flung back the night,
And there we smoked, the chief and I,
And hearkened to the soft wind sigh,
The distant music of the mountain stream,
And all the voices that e'er seem,
Half-hushed to whispers in the trees,
To speak of night's vast mysteries.
The old Sioux spoke and his eyes grew dim,
As Mem'ry kissed her hand to him,
And lured him on to tell the tale,
Of why the lonesome pine trees wail,
Thro' long, long nights of murk and dread,
Like hopeless spirits of the dead.

Onjinjintka, the Rose, lovelier than the flower,
She came and blossomed in our hearts;
We loved her as a child of the sunlight,
Smiles of the dawn rested in her eyes,
The spirit of the Good Spirit abided with her
spirit,
Thus we loved Onjinjintka, the Rose.

Many were the warriors who loved her,
Many were the gifts laid at her father's feet;
But to the warriors her father spoke:
"She is my best beloved, the flower of my heart,
Her way is my way."
Calm as the mountain lake was the heart of the Rose—
The heart of Onjinjintka, the Rose.

From the land of the rising sun a white man came,
Yellow as gold was his hair and he laughed
After the manner of his tribe—
Face to face met they—face to face,
Onjinjintka, the Rose and he of the yellow hair,
The maid seeing no evil in his smile.

For he would pluck the wild rose and when its fragrance died,
Fling it down in the dust of forgetfulness.
Onjinjintka basked in his smile,
It was as the south wind to her soul.
The white man abided with us to the Spirit Hills.
Happy then was Onjinjintka, the Rose.

Here at the foot of the Spirit Hills we made our camp,
Going no farther, being fearful of the anger of the gods.

Broken then was the heart of Onjinjintka—
Withered as the leaf in autumn was the spirit
of Onjinjintka, the Rose.
At the dawn she awoke and found him not,
Found not her white lover by her side,
In the dark night he had departed.

His trail led to a great trail—
A great trail made by many wagons;
For he had found his kind.
The white man had found his people.
For him Onjinjintka wailed as for the dead,
Broken was the heart of Onjinjintka, the Rose.

We heard her wailing in the darkness,
Wailing for her love in the darkness.
She wandered afar into the Spirit Hills.
Her father called her and she answered not,
We waited and she returned not,
Empty were our hearts without Onjinjintka,
the Rose.

Hearken, the wind comes through the pines,
It is the voice of her—
It is the voice of her wailing in the darkness,
Wailing for him who loved her not.
We shiver as we listen to her wailing,
Empty are our hearts without Onjinjintka, the
Rose.

THE GUN FIGHT

Stern his eye and ever watchful,
  Stranger to deceit or lie,
And his creed thus plain and simple:
  For the right 'tis good to die.
Woman's honor, clean and spotless,
  All unsoiled its garments white,
Rested safe beneath his banner,
  Tender, loyal, western knight.

Dark his foe and ever taunting,
  Mocking lips and evil eyes,
With a heart as foul as Hades,
  With a hate that never dies.
Words of cunning, cruel malice—
  Lo, at last he speaks a name,
That in all the border country,
  Stands for woman's scarlet shame.

Swift the flash of true hand backward,
  Then a bitter voice of doom;
And a soul all hope-forsaken,
  Fleeing thro' the outer gloom.
Then the silence and the struggle
  Of the shape upon the sod,
And a choking, husky whisper
  Of the awful name of God.

That you loved her, be it spoken,
  Loved her long and loved her true,
And as faith in the eternal,
  So she loved and trusted you.
Know the truth, Oh, knightly brother,
  In the lean land of the sage,
Justified, the word is written,
  On a white and sacred page.

LOVE AND DEATH

(*A Cowboy's Thoughts*)

I'm camping here alone tonight,
  And thoughts like ghosts all sad and pale,
Rise up to haunt my heart and drift
  Along the twisting mem'ry trail.
Her sweet, sad smile, her tender voice,
  The softness of her cheek and hand,
But she is gone, Oh, tell me where!
  What trail leads out into that land?

She used to say that every star,
  Was some dear soul whose work was done,
And in that peaceful range above,
  God night-herd stands on every one.
My soul just cries but yet those stars,
  No look of love or longing wear—
Oh, tell me, is there answer to
  That never-ending question, "Where?"

And still the stars look coldly down,
  As cold and solemn as can be;
They never smile and her kind eyes,
  Forever held a smile for me.
Up in the brakes a lone wolf howls,
  In long-drawn quavers mournfully;
And then the silence and the stars,
  Make mock of wolf and mock of me.

THE WESTERN TRAIL

(*A Sioux Version*)

In the beginning the Great Spirit gave the prairie rare gifts,
The mirage, the warm rains of springtime, the grasses and the flowers,
The buffalo, the village by the river and the children basking in the sun.
Happy were we then, oh, my people!
But from the East a white warrior came and with a mighty arrow wounded the prairie;
And the grasses and the flowers withered and the herds and the villages melted away—
Melted, oh, my people! as the snow melts before the Chinook.
In time the wound healed, but a scar was left—a long, white scar across the prairie's breast.

TO A BUFFALO SKULL

On the sable wall doth thy great skull gleam,
  A regal ornament;
Speak thou, thro' the gloom of this dusky room,
  Once lord of a continent.

Yea, once I was lord of a countless host,
  But gone is my kingly sway,
And never again will I head the herd,
  In the spring when the young calves play.
All bleached with the merciless sun and rain
  Of many and many a day,
I'm all that is left to tell the sad tale
  How the black lines passed this way.

AT THE GRAVE OF A BORDER CAVALIER

No more ring the shouts and the boisterous laughter,
That told of the joy of the bold cavalier;
Who lived out his time, caring naught for Hereafter,
Counting death as a favor and not as a fear.

Gone, gone are the days and the nights of disorder,
When none but the coward from glory was barred,
Now the grass decks thy grave, wild son of the border,
And vandals thy headstone have mockingly marred.

THE DOOM OF THE WEAK

Gaunt mother, the spring is not yet come,
  When grasses wave 'neath wild plum bloom;
When Nature smiles upon the range,
  Forgetful of the days of doom.

And that pathetic, awkward calf,
  Of all that lives to you most dear,
Cannot long lean upon your strength,
  Or feel your presence warm and near.

The gray wolf's famished and his jaws
  Hang slavering with mad desire,
Yet still your bold and dauntless front,
  His caution and his fear inspire.

No fear of self, you rise supreme
  To all that's true, to all that's good
In Nature's realm, since none surpass
  The sacrifice of motherhood.

You lurch, and then the wolf's quick leap,
  The blood's red gush upon the snow—
And one last effort to protect
  The offspring that you cherished so.

In vain you strive to reach, protect,
  Defender bold and mother meek;
Yours is the doom all merciless—
  The age-old doom of all the weak.

THE NIGHT STAMPEDE

The thunder rolled like a thousand drums,
  And the sky was torn in twain
With a livid wound, and then the hiss
  Of the madly lashing rain.

The herd swept on down the trail of doom,
  As a flare of yellow light
For a heart-beat shone on him who rode
  By the side of Death that night.

Oh, the clashing horns and grinding hooves,
  And the flick of pistol flame,
And he who headed that wild stampede,
  Lone hero without a name!

Oh, the awful rush of plunging shapes,
  When the last, last stumble came,
And the crash to earth of horse and man—
  Death won, aye, he won the game.

THE CIRCLE

Yesterday a cave-man spoke,
This land is old, this land is old;
Thus wail the voices in the smoke,
This land is old.

Yesterday a red man cried,
This land is old, this land is old;
I pass the haunts where cave-men died,
This land is old.

Yesterday a white man said,
This land is old, this land is old;
Behold this flinty arrow-head,
This land is old.

Yesterday a good man sighed,
This land is old, this land is old;
My city's pride a grave doth hide,
This land is old.

Yesterday a builder sang,
This land is old, this land is old;
From narrow trails my wide streets sprang,
This land is old.

Yesterday a savage cried,
This land is old, this land is old;
What paths are these, grass-dimmed and wide?
This land is old.

IN PASSING

You waved a slim brown hand to me
  With a grace that proved devotion
To the subtile art, Oh, sailor bold,
  Across a grassy ocean.

You drifted by with easy lope,
  Your body weaved with the motion
Of your bronco-ship, staunch bark to ride
  Across a grassy ocean.

DEAR LITTLE FIRE

Dear little fire by the upland trail,
  Well fed with twigs of oak,
By you I'll dream and soft caress
  Your tiny hands of smoke.

Dear little friend of the lonely hours,
  I'll give you after-while,
A dainty lunch of crumpled leaves
  And grass to make you smile.

Oh, then you'll romp and chatter and play,
  And laugh with quaint delight,
And throw warm kisses at the sad
  And solemn-looking night.

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